

# **NORTH PARK MINI-PARK & ASSOCIATED STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS**

## **CITY OF SAN DIEGO**

*Engineering & Capital Projects Department, Architectural Engineering & Parks*

### **COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #3: PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE REVIEW**

March 19th, 2012 ♦ 5:30pm – 8:00 p.m.

Upstairs Conference Room, North Park Theater  
2891 University Avenue, San Diego

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## **S U M M A R Y**

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### **Introduction**

On March 19, 2012, the City of San Diego Engineering & Capital Projects Department convened the third community workshop for the North Park Mini-Park & Associated Streetscape Improvements Project. The purpose of the meeting was to (a.) provide an update on the project process; (b.) review feedback from the first and second community workshops; (c.) present the proposed preferred design alternative for the mini-park and surrounding streetscapes; (d.) provide an overview of the project funding and maintenance strategy; and (e.) discuss next steps in the design and community engagement process.

### **Meeting Outreach**

To engage the wide range of stakeholders and interests in the community, the City of San Diego employed a multi-pronged outreach approach to notify and engage participants in the meeting, including:

- Distribution of a meeting notice to approximately 1,100 property owners and tenants surrounding the study area;
- Display of the meeting notice on community boards and storefronts; and
- Direct communications with key stakeholders such as Jefferson Elementary School officials, property owners within the study area, and other related City departments.

### **Meeting Format**

Approximately 30 community members participated in the open house and workshop in the upstairs conference room of the North Park Theater, 2891 University Avenue, San Diego. Upon signing-in, participants received an agenda and comment card for submitting written comments from the workshop.

The first half hour of the workshop featured an open house format where participants reviewed project posters of the proposed preferred design alternative for the mini-park and surrounding streetscapes. Project team members including representatives from the Engineering and Capital Projects department as well as planning consultants MIG, Inc. answered attendee's questions.

Andy Pendoley of MIG served as workshop facilitator and initiated the proceedings by welcoming participants and providing an overview of the workshop objectives and agenda. He then introduced Todd Schmit, Park Designer with the Engineering & Capital Projects Department, Architectural Engineering & Parks Division, who introduced himself as project manager for the project before providing a brief overview of the project purpose and background.

Mr. Pendoley then provided an update on the planning process including the initial community engagement activities completed to-date, as well as the major activities that are forthcoming including the joint North Park Recreation Council meeting and Community Workshop #4 occurring on April 23, 2012. Finally, he oriented participants to the comment card for feedback on the proposed preferred design alternative and funding/maintenance strategies.

Mr. Pendoley introduced Mukul Malhotra, Director of Urban Design and Principal with MIG, who presented a slideshow featuring the community vision and overarching concept. Mr. Malhotra then presented the proposed preferred mini-park and streetscape design elements and paused at key points throughout the presentation. Mr. Schmit also reviewed the history and current status of funding to build and maintain the mini-park and streetscapes. Additionally, Mr. Malhotra presented the preliminary cost estimates as well as the funding and maintenance strategy for discussion.

Mr. Pendoley facilitated discussions with participants regarding the presented information. During these discussions, project team members responded to questions, and Mr. Malhotra recorded participants' comments on a large wall graphic. These comments combined with comments submitted by participants are summarized below:

### **Mini-Park**

Participants discussed the mini-park improvements and design elements.

- Art
  - Integrate art holistically in the future stages of design development of the park. It should not viewed or designed as mere decoration.

- Consider murals on walls of the Beauty Supply warehouse and North Park Theater
- Allow San Diego-based artists to design gateway markers, tiles, and donor markers.
- Security
  - Design to encourage eyes on the park
  - Install lighting that promotes safety
  - Provide flexibility in the park design, to allow a future fence that is decorative/sculptural
  - Provide clear sightlines to the mini-park for garage parking attendants
- Design elements
  - Ensure softscape features are child friendly.
  - Consider how permeable hardscapes could reduce the need for storm water planters
  - Preserve the opportunity for installing permanent restrooms in the future
  - Strengthen the presence and central location of bike racks
- Infrastructure
  - Initiate park development with infrastructure
  - Solve water drainage problems
  - Relocate utilities underground
  - Plant trees in perimeter
  - Explore more trees
  - Explore permeable paving or concrete
- Key Common Priority Improvements
  - Greening
    - Trees
    - Planting
  - Infrastructure improvements
    - Minimize flooding and standing water
    - Drainage / Planters
  - Art that includes special paving and other opportunities

Other individual major improvements mentioned included undergrounding the power lines, exploring a moveable stage, a speaker's corner at the stage, and exploring how things can be created in the short term, that could take shape gradually.

## **Streets**

Participants discussed the streetscape improvements and design elements

### **29<sup>th</sup> Street**

- Narrow the street
- Ensure the loading zone
- Remove 8 parking spaces
- Consider one-way northbound to prevent cars leaving garage from entering the community
- Preserve parking opportunities on the street

### **Granada Avenue**

- Preserve parking opportunities
- Install storm water planters

### **North Park Way**

- Remove the 13 north side parking spaces
- Consider back-in diagonal parking design
- Install four-way stop signs at the intersections with Granada Avenue and 29<sup>th</sup> Street
- Remove all parking to increase safety for bikers and pedestrians
- Preserve parking

### **Utah Street**

- Add 2-way bike way on the west side
- Preserve parking
- Prioritize safety for kids at school drop-off locations

## **Implementation: Funding and Maintenance**

Participants discussed the funding and maintenance strategy for both the mini-park and adjoining streetscape improvements.

### **Phasing**

- Develop a phasing plan for the mini-park
- Ensure proper implementation the first time
- Consider a phased approach to the streets, particularly 29<sup>th</sup> Street
- Identify the completion date for the community
- Phase-in the hardscape installation

### **Maintenance**

- Establish a maintenance plan
- Address security needs for night hours
- Contract with UrbanCorps or AmeriCorps

- Clarify maintenance funding needs for Phase 1

### **Funding**

- Recommend an implementation plan for the available \$1.25 million
- Solicit contributions from businesses for maintenance
- Make vendor areas available for rental to generate revenue
- Revisit creating a maintenance assessment district after initial mini-park build-out
- Post images in business windows to increase interest in project and raise funding
- Solicit corporate sponsorship
- Explore naming of trees, special pavers and other similar elements to solicit donations from residents and businesses.

### **Community participation**

- Facilitate a community-based, collaborative effort
- Conduct regular supervised clean-up by community
- Partner community volunteers with City landscapers
- Mandate opportunities for local artists and contractors
- Conduct community fundraisers (e.g. bake sale)
- Allow local residents or groups to sponsor trees

### **Next Steps & Close**

Mr. Schmit closed the meeting by thanking participants for their time and encouraging their attendance at the April 23, 2012 joint North Park Recreation Council meeting and Community Workshop #4.